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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 191030Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1790

UNCLAS ROME 000325

SIPDIS

PM/DTCC: BALLARD

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ETTC](#) [KOMC](#) [IT](#)
SUBJECT: BLUE LANTERN CHECK ON LICENSE 050109951: RIFLES

REF: SECSTATE 1420

[¶1.](#) (SBU) This is an action request. Please see paragraph [¶6.](#)

[¶2.](#) (SBU) Summary: Post performed a Level 3 Blue Lantern Post Shipment End Use Check on Ditta Individuale Adriano De Rossi, a Rome-based bona fide gun dealer. The sensitive items -- license number 050109951 -- were properly secured and the company's management professed familiarity with US export controls as well as restrictions on re-transfer of sensitive items. The company asked for clarification on why certain high precision rifles were approved for export licenses by the State Department, while others that in the company's view were almost identical, were rejected. End Summary.

[¶3.](#) (SBU) Econoffs performed a site visit to Ditta Individuale Adriano De Rossi, a Rome-based gun dealer on 20 January, 2009. De Rossi is the exclusive dealer for McMillen rifles in Italy. It is also the exclusive supplier for EDM Arms, Pedrot Ordinance Factory, US Optics, and Ebelstock. The company was founded in 2004 as a shooting range called "Shooting Paradise," and in 2007 began selling weapons. It began to import sensitive weapons from the US in the summer of 2008. It has annual revenue of about 90,000 Euros, though its future revenue will be highly dependent upon securing export licenses from the State Department, De Rossi said. The other services sold by the company are sniper training for Italian Special Forces and production of reactive still targets for long-range shooting. De Rossi said his company refuses to provide sniper training to civilians. The company also imports and tests rifles for the Carabinieri, Italy's paramilitary police service.

[¶4.](#) (SBU) Econoffs verified the presence of 3 McMillan TAC-308 Bolt Action Rifles, .308 WIN Caliber. One gun listed in Ref A --a McMillan TAC 338 Bolt Action Rifle, serial number 732 RLL - was not present; De Rossi said it was serving as a demonstration unit with the Carabinieri. De Rossi had imported one of the rifles as a demo unit for the Italian Ministry of Defense, and hoped to secure a larger contract if the Italian government gave it favorable reviews. De Rossi explained that the Italian government prefers to purchase weapons through Italian intermediaries rather than buying directly from a non-Italian foreign-based supplier. De Rossi was familiar with the regulations governing the import of US-origin defense articles, including restrictions on re-transfer or re-export.

[¶5.](#) (SBU) De Rossi's regular customer is the Italian Ministry of Defense and, to a lesser extent, the Carabinieri. The company also sells via gun shops to civilians who have the appropriate licenses. The gun shops are located in various provinces of Italy. De Rossi said Italian law prohibits selling a weapon to a non-resident. He also noted that all purchases had to be accompanied by a form from the buyer's local police station, to ensure the authorities knew the location of all rifles. According to De Rossi, civilians

typically use the guns he sells for target practice, and occasionally for the hunting of wild boar. De Rossi noted that many customers wished to purchase .50 caliber versions of high-precision rifles, but he was restricted under Italian law to selling .223 or .308 caliber rifles. These types of rifles are typically sold to individual customers for sport purposes.

16. (SBU) De Rossi said he would like to import more McMillan rifles but the State Department restricts these imports, except on a pre-sold basis. He noted that Remington rifles of the same quality, size, and technical specifications were imported without this restriction. Post requests guidance on this question.

17. (SBU) Post judged the security of the facilities to be sufficient. The rifles were stored in a locked gun safe, within a locked and alarmed building. The owner kept the key to the safe with himself at all times. The alarms, one of which was silent, were connected directly to a local police station. Records seemed to be in good order. The enterprise had only two employees, but the duo seemed capable and legitimate.

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